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A PLAN OF LECTURES ON THE PRINCIPLES OF NONCONFORMITY.

For the INSTRUCTION of

CATECHUMENS.

By R. ROBINSON.

WHATEVER MODERATION OR CHARITY WE MAY OWE TO MEN'S PERSONS, WE OWE NONE AT ALL TO THEIR ERRORS, AND TO THAT FRAME WHICH IS BUILT ON, AND SUPPORTED BY THEM.

Bishop BURNET.

THE FIFTH EDITION.

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EASTERN ASSOCIATION.

Harlow, Essex, June 18th, 1778

This Syllabus, entitled, A PLAN OF LECTURES ON THE PRINCIPLES OF NONCONFORMITY, *drawn up by our brother Robinson, has been read and approved by us at this association, and we hereby recommend it to our sister churches.*

Signed, by order of all, by

MORGAN JONES, Moderator.

PREFACE.

THERE are three ſorts of perſons, who abſent themſelves from the epiſcopal places of worſhip eſtabliſhed by publick authority in England; commonly, though improperly denominated THE *Church* OF *England*. The firſt ſort conſiſts of irreligious perſons, who renounce *all public worſhip*. The ſecond is compoſed of ſuch as approve of what they ſuppoſe the doctrine, diſcipline, and conſtitution of the epiſcopal church: but diſapprove of the *men*, who officiate in it; either on account of their doctrine or practice, or both, which they think are incompatible with the conſtitution of it. We are not addreſſing ourſelves to either of theſe claſſes; to their own maſter they ſtand or fall. The third ſort do not diſſent from the officers and members of the eſtabliſhed church merely (to them they wiſh every felicity.) but they diſapprove of the CONSTITUTION ITSELF, and object againſt all the principles that ſupport it. Theſe are, ſtrictly ſpeaking, the only *Nonconformiſts* or *proteſtant diſſenters* in this kingdom; they conſiſt of the va-

rious denominations of Baptiſts—Independents —Preſbyterians—andthe people called Quakers; and all their congregations together in England and Wales amount to near two thouſand, ſo that they bear about the proportion of a fifth to the epiſcopal church.

Whatever may be the worth of thoſe arguments, by which the religion of theſe diſſenters is governed, whether they be ſophiſtical, probable, or demonſtrative, it is beyond a doubt, they have operated, and they continue to operate a firm, reſolute attachment to nonconformity; and it muſt needs be worth while to propoſe them in all their fair extent to the inquiſitive youth in our communities, for whom our firſt wiſh is chriſtianity, our ſecond nonconformity. We have no ſecrets in our religion; and although the rigour of times hath formerly obliged us to teach it in corners, yet the truths taught merit the attention of all mankind. Many of our brethren have lamented the inattention of our youth to diſſenting principles, and they attribute it to one or other of the three following cauſes. 1. It is uſual to impute the virtuous moderation of the ſtate to the epiſcopal church, and to account a diſſent from ſuch a mild church leſs neceſſary now than formerly. The truth is, what the church was at firſt that it ſtill continues. It retains the ſame articles, the ſame ceremonies, the ſame courts, officers, principles, and canons, that it had all the time of its perſecuting, and it refuſes to repeal any of them. The ſtate has reſtrained the operation of the eccleſiaſtical ſyſtem

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on diſſenters: but the ſyſtem itſelf is the ſame. The ſtate tolerates: but the church does not. Our youth ſhould diſtinguiſh this. 2. Nonconformity is unfaſhionable, and in ſome places through various cauſes, contemptible; and faſhion is law to too many young people. 3. Many pious miniſters, all intent on incultating the neceſſity of being ſaved from ſin and puniſhment through faith in Chriſt, omit theſe peculiar principles of diſſent. We highly commend their zeal: but, as all their labours proceed on ſuppoſition of the truth of theſe principles, we preſume, they ought diligently to examine and inculcate them. If our miniſters neglect to teach theſe true grounds of chriſtian action, they have no right to expect of their people any other than blind obedience or open apoſtacy.

There are many miniſters among us, who love work, and are indifferent about wages; who are induſtrious to diſſeminate religious principles in ſeaſon and out of ſeaſon; whoſe higheſt happineſs is the increaſe of the kingdom of our redeemer. Theſe worthy diſintereſted ſervants of Chriſt are too often confined in regard to books, time, circumſtances, and ſo on: to will is preſent with them, but how to perform that which they wiſh, they find not. To them we humbly preſent the following analyſis, hoping it may facilitate their diſſemination of their own principles among the youth in their aſſemblies.

We ſhall have ſuppoſed the good miniſter to have divided his congregation into three general

parts. The firſt is the *church*, properly ſo called. The ſecond *little children* to be catechized; and the third, for whoſe inſtruction this analyſis is intended, CATECHUMENS, conſiſting of perſons waiting to be admitted to church-fellowſhip, or of any others, who may chuſe to be informed.

The primitive church was compoſed of perſons profeſſing faith and repentance. Where this profeſſion was ſincere it was the iſſue of cool deliberate examination, which neceſſarily preceded it. While the extraordinary influences of the holy ſpirit continued during the firſt age of the church, converſion was uſually quick, and people in very ſhort ſpaces were delivered from the power of darkneſs, and tranſlated into the kingdom of God's dear ſon. After the ceſſation of extraordinary gifts, primitive chriſtian miniſters uſed an ordinary method of inſtruction. Such ignorant people as deſired to join chriſtian churches were formed into ſocieties, regularly inſtructed by the miniſters; and, at a proper ſtate, brought forward to church fellowſhip. Theſe were called *Catechumens*; and the revival of this ſtate is previouſly neceſſary to the uſe of the following lectures. Theſe are a kind of church-ſchools, more ſolemn than private converſation, and not ſubject to the laws of publick worſhip. Here the paſtor may ſimplify and familiarize a thouſand topicks inadmiſſible to the pulpit, which yet all belong to his office; for he is the profeſſor of divinity in his own congregation, and the giving of lectures on nonconformity is one branch of his office.

I ſhall ſuppoſe the paſtor, then, to give public notice ſome time in each September that he ſhall give a courſe of lectures on nonconformity in the enſuing winter—that the firſt lecture will begin at ſix in the evening of the ſecond Wedneſday in October—that the ſecond will be that day fortnight; and ſo on, once a fortnight; and, conſequently, that the whole courſe, conſiſting of twelve lectures, will be finiſhed about the middle of March—That all who chooſe to attend ſhall be admitted on giving in their names to the miniſter—and that timely notice ſhall be given of ſuch a lecture-room as will contain the company. What ſmall expences occur, for firing, candles, ſervants, and ſo on, may be eaſily diſcharged by a proportionable ſubſcription.

It would be impertinent to pretend to expatiate on the utility of ſuch a ſervice; and more ſo to offer the following ſketch as a perfect invariable model of it. We only mean to convey a clear notion of what we aim at in theſe lectures. Moſt of our paſtors are far ſuperior to the want of ſuch helps; and, if no junior have any occaſion for them, we flatter ourſelves they may not be unacceptable to ſuch of our private youth as wiſh to trace the ſubject, and have no tutor to guide them. Each of theſe Analyſes of lectures conſiſts of a given number of notes. Each note contains one or more diſtinct ideas, and each idea is ſufficient to form a period; the whole conſtituting a lecture. We have made half hiſtory, and half

doctrine. They elucidate each other, and nonconformity includes both. We ſhall ſubjoin an example, at the end, of the manner of turning theſe notes into diſcourſes.

PREFACE

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TO THE

FIFTH EDITION.

THIS little piece was written, without any malevolent design, about three years ago, merely for the use of a few associated churches, and, by their desire, to avoid the trouble of transcribing, it was printed: but it was not then *published*, nor was it intended to be published afterwards, because it was known to contain some disagreeable truths, which are at all times a censure, and therefore always an offence to some people, and it was thought needless to offend where there was no hope to reform.

By some means, unknown to me, the book fell into the hands of a certain noble peer, who thought proper to mention it in a debate in the house of lords, and, the dissenters bill being just then depending in parliament, much was said about it also in the house of commons. These accidents,

accidents, and not any inclination of mine, publiſhed this book to the world.

During the ſale of four editions I took no notice of any thing that was ſaid about it, and my ſilence proceeded from a conſciouſneſs that nothing was further from my natural diſpoſition, nothing more oppoſite to my religious principles, nothing more contrary to my whole conduct through life than rancorous bigotry in matters of religion, and I thought I had been ſo carefull in writing the book to diſtinguiſh between *men* and *things*, that nothing but wilful ignorance could impute ſuch a diſpoſition to me.

At length I judge it neceſſary to ſay a few words to ſuch as think this little inſignificant pamphlet of conſequence enough to deſerve their cenſure, and I divide theſe gentlemen into two claſſes.

The firſt conſiſts of thoſe, who have incorporated their own paſſions into the chriſtian religion, who call ignorance ſolidity, indifference candour, cenſoriouſneſs and ill temper zeal for truth, pride of prieſthood propriety of character, or, to uſe the language of a prophet, *who are wiſe* enough *in their own eyes, and prudent* enough *in their own ſight to call evil good, and good evil.*

To *Candidus* and *Veritas* and *Niger* and *Mendax*, and all the reſt of this order, I owe no ſervice, write no anſwers, and have nothing to ſay

ſay, except that as I never intended to offend them, ſo I never meant to pleaſe them, and as I never printed a line for their uſe, ſo I never intend to review one.

To the other claſs I turn with the moſt profound eſteem, and, as they have ſome how miſtaken my meaning, I beg leave with all poſſible deference to ſay a few words concerning the *ſubject*, of which this book treats, and the *manner*, in which it is here treated.

The ſubject of the book is *the conſtitution of a chriſtian church.* It is affirmed, that Chriſt is the head, believers the members, ſcripture biſhops and deacons the only officers, ſcripture the law, and pure and undefiled religion the ſole object of this community. How can this ſubject be offenſive to any diſintereſted chriſtian?

The manner of treating it is by a ſtatement of hiſtorical facts, which never were, nor ever can be denied. Indeed theſe facts might have been narrated with an accompanyment of ſoft words, that would have rendered them leſs glaring; but then this would have been a hiſtory, and not what it is now an analyſis, an index of hiſtory, or a kind of chapter of contents. The tranſlators of the Bible have thought fit to put at the head of each chapter a brief ſketch of its contents, and were theſe contents publiſhed alone they would appear full as uncourtly as this ſyllabus. The truth is, ſome of us are ugly fellows, and no ſtyle of painting can reconcile us to our own faces.

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Where the truth of facts cannot be denied, and where the manner of ſtating them is a matter of comparative indifference, there will remain only one method of getting rid of them, that is, by pretending to know the *motives* of the narrator, and by attributing to him the worſt, that can be imagined. This is an expeditious method, and fitted to all men, even to ſuch as have neither abilities nor virtue to qualify them for any other ſervice. This may be done without reading and without reaſoning, it may be done while we make good cheer, ſmoke our pipes, or job in the ſtocks; though it cannot be done without extreme folly by thoſe, whoſe cauſe is pleaded by the books they cenſure.

Although the truth of a hiſtory does not at all depend on the motive of an hiſtorian, nor the ſtrength of an argument on the ſpirit of him who urges it, and although *my* motives in writing this piece are too inſignificant to merit the attention of any man, yet I will ſtrain a point, and honeſtly declare, as far as I know my heart, and in the ſight of him who ſearcheth it, what induced me to compile this little piece. My tale ſhall be plain and artleſs, ſuffice it at preſent, that it is true.

I have long obſerved, and much enjoyed, the felicity of being a Briton. Great Britain is the firſt country in the world, and the God of nature hath ſtored it with every thing that can make its inhabitants happy. Its inſular ſituation,

tion, the extent and figure of its coaſts, the iſlands that ſurround it, its ſprings, waters, and navigable rivers, its timbers, fruits, herbs, corn, and all other productions of its luxuriant ſoil, its immenſe treaſures of earths, ſalts, foſſils, minerals, ſtone, marble, and fuel, its animals, wild and tame, flocks, herds, hives, daries, poultry, fiſheries, decoys, the ſtately horſe, and the hardy aſs, all miniſtring to the ſubſiſtence and pleaſure of its inhabitants, the ſtature, genius, fecundity and longevity of its natives, the temperature of its climate, in one word, the natural advantages of Great Britain render it, upon the whole, the moſt beautiful and deſirable country in the world. The whole is a rich preſent, which the bounty of Providence has beſtowed upon us.

I have obſerved, with the utmoſt pleaſure, the art and induſtry of my countrymen aſſiſting nature. Agriculture, architecture, navigation, commerce, literature, arts, ſciences, in endleſs varieties give grace and elegance to this lovely iſland. Who can behold cities full of inhabitants, artiſts and manufacturers employed in thouſands, ſhops thronged with cuſtomers, warehouſes full of ſtores and goods, markets and fairs expoſing plenty at our doors, roads, rivers, fields, villages, mines, and ſea-ports all alive; I aſk, who can behold all theſe in his own native ſpot, and not exclaim, may my country flouriſh to the end of time!

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I have recieved an addition to my pleaſure, by underſtanding, that all the natural and artificial advantages of Great Britain are capable of great improvement, and I have been happy to ſee every year new advances towards national perfection. The forming new ſocieties for improvment, the invention of new machines for facilitating labour, the incloſing of waſtes, the making of roads, ſcouring rivers, cutting canals, draining fens, planting timber, importing foreign arts, books, grains, graſſes, animals, all theſe, and a thouſand other amendments and inventions, convince us that we are not yet arrived at our zenith, and open a future proſpect of rational pleaſure and joy.

My pleaſure has been increaſed, by obſerving the happy conſtitution of our government. Our mixed monarchy contains all the excellencies, and provides againſt the evils of the three ſorts of government, of which it is compounded. It is, indeed, a human compoſition, and therefore, like every other human production, imperfect, and liable to degenerate. Its excellence does not lie in any one of its component parts, but in a nice union of the three, which union is then perfect, when it prevents any one from preponderating, and rendering the other two ſubſervient to itſelf. Whatever may be my private opinion concerning the preſent inclination of the balance, I have ſaid nothing on the ſubject in this book.

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My pleasure has risen higher still, by observing what innumerable benefits flow from both the justice and the generosity of this happy kingdom. We have a system of law universally administered, that holds the life, liberty, and property of every individual sacred, and a long train of well-contrived and effective charities, consisting of schools, hospitals, public provisions for all the wants and all the maladies, to which mankind in the several stages of life are exposed. To crown all, the religion of our country is christianity, the last best gift of God to man. All these advantages put together, afford an abundance of felicity, sufficient to satiate the most benevolent soul; and, whether it be ignorance or knowledge, virtue or vice, religion or enthusiasm, certain I am, observing these advantages of the land of my nativity has given me inexpressible pleasure, and has made Britain appear a paradise to me. Who that loves his species can help forming the most ardent wishes for the prosperity of this country? Who can help saying, *Blessed is he that blesseth thee, and cursed is he that curseth thee.*

Whoever indulges a pleasure arising from these considerations, will find it interrupted by a universal complaint of the general infidelity and profligacy of the inhabitants of this happy clime. It is not a murmur issuing from the cell of a rigid monk, or an explosion of the fierce rage of an enthusiast; it is the sad and sober remonstrance of all the wisest and best men in the

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kingdom, and it is ſupported by proofs, alas! too glaring and notorious.

After we have made as many conceſſions to the frailty of human nature as the tendereſt parent would make to the follies of his children, and after we have given all the merit, that an exceſs of candour can deſire, to the virtues of our countrymen, we are obliged to confeſs, that we abound with impiety and immorality. Atheiſm, Deiſm, infidelity in a thouſand forms, drunkenneſs, debauchery, ſwearing, profanation of the Lord's day, variegated frauds, and boundleſs luxury in ten thouſand ſhapes, diſgrace this country; and theſe are not confined to the low and illiterate, but they profane all ranks and degrees among us. Examine a county election, obſerve a city-feaſt, or a country wake, walk through public places of buſineſs or pleaſure, attend the courts of juſtice and liſten to the cauſes trying there, peep into hoſpitals and jails, ſee the navy, and the army, in a word, behold the whole body politick, and behold, in the language of a prophet, *a ſinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a ſeed of evil doers, forſaking the Lord, and provoking the holy one of Iſrael to anger.*

Two things have here made forcible impreſſions on my mind, Firſt, it is certain, that chriſtianity is a religion ſo good in itſelf, ſo admirably adapted to the wants and juſt wiſhes of mankind, ſo plain to the meaneſt capacity, and ſo clear and irreſiſtible in its evidences of divinity, that it is not capable of any improvement, it

it is, like all the other works of God, *perfect and entire, and wanting nothing, commending itself to every man's conscience in the sight of God.* Yet, secondly, it is equally clear, that the precepts of this religion are not practised by the bulk of us, that its beauty is not seen, and that its evidences make few or no impressions on our minds. A question, then, naturally arises, what is the cause of this universal darkness amidst such a profusion of light?

It does not proceed from a scarcity of teachers. Our schools have masters, our universities tutors, our nobility domestic chaplains, our parishes priests, our inns of court, our regiments, ships, hospitals, and jails, have preachers, chaplains, or ordinaries, all devoted from their earliest youth to the service of religion, all educated with a view to diffuse the knowledge of christianity, all freed from secular employments, and professing to teach and exemplify the principles and practices of Jesus Christ.

It does not proceed from a scarcity of provision for our instructors, for beside the immense salaries paid to some, and the abundance of small dues to all, the whole produce of the ground, except in a few cases, is every tenth year allotted them. Jews and christians, papists and protestants, conformists and nonconformists pay their share.

It is impossible, on the one hand, to deny the wickedness of this nation, for, we are daily told, that the present calamitous war, the ruin of trade

trade, the increaſe of taxes, the many, very many ills, under which we groan, are all puniſhments of our ſins; hence general faſts, and faſt-ſermons, and in every pulpit catalogues of crimes to be repented of, and forborn. On the other hand, it is impoſſible to deny, that national wickedneſs is the effect of a cauſe, and that there is a great fault ſomewhere.

I ventured to ſuppoſe, that this fault lay, not in the clergy, but in the conſtitution of that church, which they are retained to ſupport. I examined the doctrines taught by Jeſus Chriſt on the mount, and compared them with the thirty-nine articles of faith; I read the diſcourſes delivered by Jeſus Chriſt at the ordination of his twelve apoſtles and ſeventy diſciples, and, having done juſtice to the ſubject by leaving out the extraordinary, and retaining only the ordinary parts, I compared this remainder with the book of conſecration, and ordering of prieſts and deacons, and ſo very ſcrupuous was I in making this contraſt, that I procured of a particular friend that very *edition** of the book to which the clergy ſubſcribe, and which is ſo extremely ſcarce, that few in the kingdom have ſeen it. I compared the other diſcourſes of Chriſt and his Apoſtles with the two books of homilies. I collected the Lord's prayer, and the other prayers of ſcripture together, and com-

* See the thirty-ſixth article of religion, intitled, *Of conſecration of biſhops and miniſters.*

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pared them with the liturgy. I compared the rules of ecclesiastical action laid down in the new Testament with the canons of the church, the temper and disposition of Christ with the temper and spirit of these laws. In one word, I compared the gospel according to the four evangelists, with the gospel according to the episcopal reformers, and I found, or thought I found, an admirable fitness in the first to answer the ends of Christ's coming into the world, that is, to make men wise and good, and consequently an unfitness in the last.

My conviction increased, by comparing the history of the gospel, according to the four evangelists, as recorded in the acts of the apostles, with the history of the gospel according to Cranmer, as recorded in all our historians, and, from the whole, I could not help concluding, that were christianity proposed now to Britons as it was then to Greeks and Romans, it would produce as good effects, because we have as much good sense as they, and it would produce no commotions and allowed persecutions, because we have better notions of civil and religious liberty than they had. I verily believe, it is not real, but disguised christianity, that is the object of the suspicion, doubt, and ridicule of infidels.

Whenever we talk of reformation, though we detest a spirit of persecution, and propose no means but reason, argument, and example, yet some men's heads instantly swarm with notions of anarchy, confusions, convulsions of church

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and ſtate, ſkirmiſhes and battles, and wounds and priſons, and fire and blood. They take fright, talk wildly, and, with artifice truly ſophiſtical, ſet up a cry, treaſon, ſedition, republicaniſm, error, hereſy, ſchiſm, all guſhing out, and threatening to overflow, and carry away monarchy, univerſities, literature, candour, indulgence, toleration, and religion, and yet God knows there is not one word of *truth* in all this.

Let us ſuppoſe a caſe. I imagine ſome idle retired man, when the pariſh officers call for a rate, to caſt his eyes on their accounts, and to perceive 20 ſhillings charged for waſhing the Prieſt's ſurplice four times in the year. Suppoſe him to ſay to them, Gentlemen, there are ten thouſand pariſhes in England, at this rate we pay ten thouſand pounds annually for waſhing ſurplices, and there are many collegiate churches and chapels, many cathedrals and other chapels belonging to hoſpitals, ſchools, and ſo on, which muſt be laid at leaſt at a third part of the above ſum. Surplice-waſhing, then, coſts the nation above thirteen thouſand a year. I ſay nothing of three pounds for a new one every ſeven years: but I do think the whole money might be better employed, and the religion of Jeſus Chriſt ſuffer no damage. Suppoſe this calculator a bigot or a madman, it is ſhocking to ſuppoſe him on this account an enemy to candour or learning, religion or government.

A certain dignitary of the epiſcopal church, for whom I ſhall always entertain the higheſt regard,

regard, once did me the honour to ask me, on supposition he and I had been appointed by conformists and nonconformists to reconcile differences, and to form a bond of union to incorporate the two bodies into one, what alterations in the present constitution I would wish, and what terms I would propose. I replied, I would beg leave, before I entered on any particulars, to settle one preliminary article with him, that was the doctrine of *imposition*. To this he instantly acceded, as indeed every man of sense must, for, if any thing in nature be clear, this is, one christian ought not to impose his religious principles and modes of worship on another. Each ought to leave another in possession of the same liberty of thinking and acting, which he himself enjoys. This preliminary settled, I took the liberty to say, I have nothing more to add, for by this one article, the whole is effected, and effected, (O marvellous!) in an alcove in a garden, without blood or blows or angry words.

This just principle would operate to enfranchise every parish in Britain, for each congregation would choose its own minister, instead of supporting one imposed by a patron. Each minister would form and adopt principles of his own, instead of subscribing a creed imposed on him by others. If people thought priests and prayer-books, and surplices and ceremonies necessary to religion, they would support them by their own methods, instead of obliging others to maintain a ritual, from which they derive no benefit. In a word, the whole nation would

would be put in poſſeſſion of religious liberty, and inſtead of leaving religion to the care of a few, we ſhould, probably, each examine the matter, and take care of himſelf, and this I ſhould call virtue, if not chriſtian piety.

The reverend prebendary of Wincheſter, who thought fit to animadvert on this book in a ſeries of letters addreſſed to his Lord Biſhop of London, acknowledges the want of ſome reviſion, and reformation, and in this he ſpeaks the language of all conſiderate members of his community: but the ſubjects to be reviſed are the articles, and the liturgy, not the point, the great point, RELIGIOUS LIBERTY, on which all the controverſy turns. We object againſt a *conſtitution*, and we are anſwered by encomiums on the *officers*, who adminiſter it, a dignified clergyman could not ſay leſs, and a prudent biſhop would not wiſh for more.

When I wrote this book, I had no other deſign than that of convincing the young people in our nonconformiſt churches of the nature, worth and importance of primitive chriſtianity; being fully perſuaded that revealed religion can never be propoſed more wiſely, or with more probability of ſuccecs, than in the unadorned, ſimple manner, in which it was propoſed at firſt, and by which it ſubdued ſo many underſtandings to the obedience of faith. The objects of my contemplation were truth and error, chriſtianity in the hand of Chriſt, and chriſtianity in the hands of modern teachers; but as for rancour againſt the perſons of any men, or any order of men,

men, I always was, and am yet a happy ſtranger to the feeling. Captivity of conſcience is the only object of my complaint, the liberation of it the ſole object of my attention.

If I ſuppoſed ſome prelates would be puniſhed at the laſt day, I ſuppoſe theſe prelates bloody perſecutors, and do we not all affirm, that a perſecutor is a criminal, and will be puniſhed, whether it be a tradeſman, a juſtice of peace or a prelate?

It would be endleſs to anſwer quibbles upon words. It is a fact, that the preface, the cloſe of the ſixth lecture, and, in brief, the whole book diſtinguiſhes PERSONS from THINGS, agreeably to the quotation from Biſhop Burnet in the title page; and, it is equally true, that if I had the whole epiſcopal church, yea the whole papal community as much at my diſpoſal as the moſt abſolute tyrant ever had his ſlaves, I would not deprive them by force of one article of faith, or one ceremony of worſhip; I would only oblige them to ſeparate religion from civil and ſecular affairs, in order to make all mankind as free as Chriſt intended they ſhould be. I would not model a church to ſerve a ſtate: but I would eſtabliſh a ſtate on wiſe and virtuous principles, and leave a ſupernatural religion to ſupport itſelf. If prophecies and miracles, if the goodneſs of the doctrine and the lives of the founders of chriſtianity cannot maintain the credit of revelation, Alas! what can pomp and power do? *If men believe not Moſes and the prophets, neither would they be perſuaded if one roſe from the dead.*

LECTURE I.

The doctrine of free religious inquiry stated, explained, and vindicated.

INTRODUCTION.

DAVID entertained a just and beautiful idea of religion, when he called it *inquiring in Jehovah's temple* — THE phrase implies two things — 1. A right of inquiry in the people — 2. A sufficiency in revelation to answer inquiries.

STATED.

INQUIRY is interrogation — examination — search — disquisition — investigation.

RELIGIOUS inquiry is examination of all subjects that belong to religion — as — NATURE and worship of God — MORAL obligations of men — TRUTH of revelation in general — AND the meaning of each part of it.

FREE religious inquiry is examination uncontrolled by human authority — BY our own passions and prejudices — BY popular customs — FASHIONS — MAXIMS.

EXPLAINED.

THE moſt free religious inquiry is neceſſarily limited by the nature of things — NATURE and revelation exhibit ſubjects to be examined — SOME ſubjects are beyond our capacities, and a ſearch into them is vain — OTHERS are comprehenſible without revelation — OR with it — AND others again are revealed in their truth: but not in their mode of exiſtence. — INQUIRY, therefore, is then free when it poſſeſſes a liberty of proceeding as far as the reaſon and fitneſs of things allow.

VINDICATED.

1. EVERY intelligent creature is capacitated for it — GOOD men are peculiarly fitted for it — THE higheſt inſpiration does not exclude it — HEAVEN exhibits the nobleſt exerciſe of it.

2. IT is eſſential to religion.—CONSIDER the nature of God — MAN — VICE — VIRTUE—REVELATION written or preached—GRACES of a chriſtian, as faith — REPENTANCE — HUMILITY — ZEAL.

3. It is expreſly commanded by Jeſus Chriſt — HIS prophets — AND apoſtles.

4. IT injures no civil rights.—OBSERVE the three grand articles implied in it — THE

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ſole dominion of Chriſt — THE right of private judgment — ENTIRE liberty of conſcience allowed by an univerſal toleration. — NEITHER of theſe interferes with ſecular things — ALL ennoble ſociety — AND enrich and aggrandize a nation.

ILLUSTRATED.

CONTRAST the countries where it is ſuppreſſed with thoſe where it is cheriſhed — THE times in our own country when it has been depreſſed with thoſe in which it has been encouraged — THE meanneſs and miſery of thoſe, who do not claim it, with the dignity and felicity of thoſe who do — IN proſperity — ADVERSITY — AFFLICTION —PERSECUTION—DEATH—JUDGMENT.

Finiſh—BY applauding the worſhip of our churches, conſiſting of free prayer — FREE and frequent preaching — FREE debate — FREE pſalmody — FREE joining a church — FREE diſmiſſion — ALL tending to nouriſh free inquiry — WHICH human eſtabliſhments — CUMBERSOME rituals — AND penal ſanctions drop and depreſs.—— PRAISE the liberal men of all denominations, who have claimed and exerciſed it in ſtates — SCHOOLS — AND churches — AND have loſt civil liberty—PROPERTY—AND life for doing ſo.

LECTURE II.

The History of the Reformation.

INTRODUCTION.

MOSES in the viii. of Deuteronomy furnisheth us with two general notions.—1. THE doctrine of providence.—2. THE benefits of investigating it.—THESE were properly addressed to a people just freed from despotism — AND they are so to us, whom the reformation hath placed in similar circumstances — WE are come out of Egypt—BUT not yet arrived at the promised land.

THE state of religion at the accession of Henry VIII. naturally excited prejudices in our ancestors against it — AS the claims and condition of the head of the church, the pope—THE doctrines preached—THE laws of church government — THE ceremonies of worship — THE pomp — POWER — TYRANNY — AND temper of prelates — THE lives of the clergy—IMMORALITIES of religious orders—IGNORANCE and misery of the populace, &c.

THE history of the corruption of natural religion — AND of that of the Jews—ALONG with prophecies of the new testa-

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ment — STRENGTHENED thoſe prejudices againſt the papal community.

SEVERAL events coincided — LITERATURE revived — PRINTING was invented. —FRANCIS I. Henry VIII. and Charles V. purſued meaſures, which emboldened inquirers — HENRY quarrelled with the Pope — UNIVERSITIES favoured him.

HENRY's reformation altered the *form* of popery — BUT did not remove the grand *principle* of it, human authority in matters of religion — THE act of ſupremacy lodged the ſame power in the crown, that had been veſted in the pope.—IN virtue of this power the king exerciſed eccleſiaſtical legiſlation and juriſdiction — APPOINTED by commiſſion articles of religious doctrine —AND practice for the nation — AND ſupported them by penal ſanctions — REFORMATION went backward in the cloſe of his reign.

THE reformers in the reign of Edward VI. retained the doctrine of royal ſupremacy —THEY availed themſelves of his minority —AND youth — PUT out two ſervice-books — INTENDED a third — AND might have put out a thouſand on the ſame principles —THEY ſacrificed the rights of all the nation to a fancied prerogative of a boy.

AT Q. Mary's acceſſion popery was re-

ſtored — FOUR-HUNDRED proteſtants burnt — OR murdered — MULTITUDES fled — THE greateſt number ſettled at Francfort — AND worſhipped God without the Engliſh ſervice-book. — DR. Cox diſturbed their worſhip — CABALLED with the magiſtrates — GOT thoſe baniſhed, who had *purified* religion from popiſh ceremonies — INTRODUCED the Engliſh liturgy and government — AND was the cauſe of the ſeparation. — CALVIN and others were applied to — THEY cenſured the book — AND the violence of thoſe, who impoſed it.

QUEEN Elizabeth's reigning paſſion was love of deſpotiſm — HER means of obtaining it were full of duplicity — TREACHERY — AND cruelty. — SHE made religion an engine of government — AND framed the Engliſh epiſcopal corporation ſo as to ſerve her arbitrary plan of governing. — SHE obtained an abſolute ſupremacy — HER biſhops acted under it — SHE impoſed articles — CEREMONIES — OATHS — PENALTIES, &c. — AND laid the foundation of epiſcopal uniformity in the blood of the puritans with unpardonable cruelty.

Finiſh — BY contraſting the characters of her biſhops with thoſe of Fox — COVERDALE — KNOX — CARTWRIGHT —

AND

AND other puritans — AND compare the manner of framing the epiſcopal church with that of conſtituting primitive churches by the apoſtles.

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LECTURE III.

A general view of Q. Elizabeth's church.

INTRODUCTION.

REVEALED religion always gloried in a publick exposure. — MOSES published his mission in the most learned — AND inquisitive—COURT then in the world.—THE prophets did not preach in dark places of the earth — THEY reproached pagan priests for peeping and muttering in obscurity.— JESUS Christ taught no secrets — HE commanded his apostles to publish his gospel on the house-tops — AND they obeyed him strictly.—TRUTH gains by exposure—AND if silent acquiescence were essential to prelatical safety it would be a violent prejudice against it. — ONE knows not what to make of the inconsistency of this church — IT publishes laws — BOOKS — &c. — AND seems to challenge examination — AND yet it publishes other laws — AND other books —TO prohibit examination.—WE shall go by the former — AND place it in several points of light to obtain a just notion of it.

I. VIEW.

I. VIEW.

THE ſyſtem acquires no reputation from the *times* in which it was formed—NOR from the *perſons* — WHO formed it. — NEITHER Harry — NOR Elizabeth — HAD any piety— NOR one ſound notion of civil government. — THEY were only neceſſary to the reformation as they were leſs tyrants than the pope. — STATESMEN ſacrificed religion to ſave the nation. — PRELATES were choſen for ſecular purpoſes. — AND all perſons— AND events — WERE directed to crown uſes. THERE was very little learning — LESS deliberate moderation — AND no philanthropy — IN any of them all.

II. VIEW.

PRELATICAL hierarchy is not *religion* — IT is no part of moral philoſophy, which is natural religion — NOR of the plan of redemption, which is revealed religion — IT is a direct violation of both — PEOPLE in the community may think themſelves religious — AS the deformed think themſelves handſome — OR they may be religious — AS trees may be accidentally fruitful in an unfriendly ſoil — BUT the conſtitution itſelf is not religion — NOR calculated to promote it — NOT faith — NOR repentance, &c.

III. VIEW.

THE hierarchy considered as a CORPORATION is unconstitutional. — ITS creeds — AND canons — AND rules of government — are a kind of bye laws — WHICH are unconstitutional when they violate the first allowed principles of government. — CHARTERS — PATENTS — AND monopolies — flowing from regal prerogative — are so far illegal — as they injure society at large.

IV. VIEW.

PRELACY as *a system of governing* is unsound at heart. — IN all good governments — THE people are the origin of power — BUT the people have no authority here. — THE parliament, that authenticated the hierarchical system exceeded their powers — THE people could not commit — NOR did they commit the choice of a religion to them — AND had they elected them for that purpose — THEY could not constitutionally bind their successors — AND they might as well have stated our taxes to the end of the world — as our religion. — PRELACY has always thriven most under arbitrary princes — AND discovered one uniform invariable attachment to dominion over conscience.

V. VIEW.

V. V I E W.

An established hierarchy is beneficial to mankind — as it is a very sound conservative principle in literature. — A given form of scripture — ASSERTED by one — on juniors — is sufficient for inquiry, the food of learning — and persons education at the primary level — ASSERTED by the scriptures fulfil the purpose — DIVINITY is no science — CREEDS — AND THE — are all in all. — THERE IS nothing to lean on in reliance — TWIRT a man's conscience and all. — THERE is nothing to improve — FOR to WEEP not to endeavour to alter — is to give up the idea of improvement. — THERE is nothing to do — THE WORD does that — NO OTHER — NO ASSENT — PERSUASION — FOR the people were all made christians at baptism.

VI. V I E W.

THE episcopal establishment may be viewed as falling in — or rather out — with the GREAT plan of redemption — TO be communicated by SPEAKING. — THE plan was laid to make all men see the manifold wisdom of God — BY preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ — [illegible]

III. VIEW.

THE hierarchy, cemented and corporate, in engrossment of the revenues — powers — rules of government — the school of the Jesuits — which are unchangeable, when they violate the established principles of government — CHARTERS — PATENTS — AND monopolies — arising from royal prerogative — are to be repealed — as they injure society at large.

IV. VIEW.

FALLACY as a system of government is unsound at heart. — IN all good governments — THE people are the original of power — but the people have no authority here. — THE parliament, that represented the theocratical system, exercised their powers — THE people could not command — NOR did they command — the events of a religion to them — AND that they clothed them for this purpose — THEY could not continuously bind them, the ellos — AND they — as well their — being — slaves to the — of the people — over religion — THE AND has always — soil under — ordinary phases — AND ordered one uniform — variable — mechanical — to dominion — over conscience.

V. VIEW.

V. VIEW.

An eſtabliſhed hierarchy is baneful to *learning* — ESPECIALLY ſound critical religious literature. — A given ſenſe of ſcripture — IMPOSED by oath — ON juniors — PRECLUDES free inquiry, the ſoul of learning — and poiſons education at the ſpring-head—ACCORDINGLY, the ſcriptures ſink into diſrepute. — DIVINITY is no ſcience at univerſities — CLASSICKS — AND mathematicks — are all in all. — THERE is nothing to find out in religion — THIRTY nine articles tell all. — THERE is nothing to improve — FOR to ſwear not to endeavour to alter — is to give up the idea of improvement. — THERE is nothing to defend — THE ſword does that.—NO uſe of reaſon—ARGUMENT—PERSUASION—FOR the people were all made chriſtians at baptiſm.

VI. VIEW.

TH epiſcopal eſtabliſhment may be viewed as falling in — or rather out — with the generous plan of redemption — TO be communicated by *preaching*. — THE plan was laid to make all men ſee the manifold wiſdom of God — BY preaching the unſearchable riches of Chriſt — BUT this ſyſtem

ſyſtem drives ſome away from publick worſhip — FATIGUES others with tedious — unmeaning — ceremonies — LEAVES but a few minutes for preaching—EMPLOYS them but ſeldom—AND then devotes them to a rapid declamation — IN favour of a dry morality — a dream to amuſe — or a drug to ſtupify.

VII. VIEW.

CONSIDER epiſcopacy as it affects *property*. —CALCULATE the charge of introducing—SUPPORTING — ADORNING — EMPLOYING it. — IT is an enormous tax — IMPOSED on induſtry — TO empower a few individuals — TO create others like themſelves — TO ſign a few uſeleſs papers — TO loll in indolence — TO riot in luxury — AND to defeat among lords—what liberal acts for religious liberty are ſupported by commons.

VIII. VIEW.

PRELACY hurts *morality*.—MORALITY is either ſupported by perſonal principles — BUT this ſyſtem is formed for the deſtruction of principles — OR by imitation of bright examples — BUT alas! how few ſuch have we ever heard of — AND how are prevarication—HYPOCRISY—FORMALITY —BIGOTRY, &c. propagated by it.

Finiſh—

Finish — BY placing prelates — AND people — BEFORE the judge of the whole earth at the last day. — REPRESENT the glorious redeemer exhibiting his faithful servants — WHOM prelacy ruined for claiming their natural — AND religious rights — AND saying to these holy tyrants — THESE had meat — drink — and habitations — BUT ye reduced them to hunger — thirst — and banishment.— I gave them cloathing — BUT ye stripped them naked.—THEY had health — AND liberty from me — SICKNESS — AND imprisonment from you. — DEPART.

LECTURE IV.

The history of Puritanism during the reign of James I.

JAMES I. was weak in his intellects — PROFANE in his life — DESPOTICAL in his government. — HE pretended to learning — AND religion — BUT was destitute of both — AND was an ignorant — CONTEMPTIBLE tyrant. — He came bad out of Scotland — AND English bishops made him worse. — HE was the author of all the calamities of his son's reign — AND has been the scorn of every impartial writer since.

JAMES's bishops were fit tools for such a tyrant. — WHITGIFT was bad — BANCROFT worse — LAUD the worst of all. — THE less despotical were equally contemptible for countenancing their inhuman church-polity. — PRELACY naturally friendly to popery and tyranny.

PURITANS were of four sorts. — 1. DOCTRINAL — zealously attached to Calvinism. — 2. PRACTICAL — of severe morals. — 3. DISCIPLINARIAN — aiming to make scripture the rule of reformation. — 4. POLITICAL — endeavouring to abridge prerogative, and extend popular liberty.

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THE *third* ſort of Puritans were divided into Preſbyterians — BROWNISTS — INDEPENDENTS — BAPTISTS, &c. — Some had formed churches of their own — OTHERS hoped for a comprehenſion in the epiſcopal church — AND employed all peaceable — AND conſtitutional means of obtaining it. — All were perſecuted for one — AND that the *unpardonable ſin* in the eyes of a Deſpot, denying that the king's *will* was a nation's *law*.

THE Hampton-court conference was a ridiculous farce — A compound of king-craft and prieſtcraft. ——— THE actors in it forgot nothing but their maſks. —— THE puritans would not be gulled by it — BUT continued to diſſent — AND they were right.

THINGS were in a ſtate favourable to the increaſe of arbitrary church power, when the convocation that made the preſent body of canons, met. — COURTIERS and prelates of the moſt deſpotical principles were the king's favourites. — THE parliament had juſt ſuffered him to pack a houſe of commons — THE ſee of Canterbury was vacant — THE way to it was by conducting court meaſures in convocation. — THE prelates played their parts ſo well that they made a code of epiſcopal church-law — CONSISTING of 141 canons — ALL tending

to eſtabliſh abſolute dominion over conſcience — AND to ruin all, who could not ſwear to a falſhood — THAT is, that the epiſcopal corporation is a truly *apoſtolical* church — SO perfect as to need no future reviſion. — THIS ſenſeleſs cruel code of law was ratified by regal patent—NOT by parliament — and has been adjudged therefore to be binding on the epiſcopal clergy —BUT not on the reſt of the nation.

THE king and the prelates more violent in poſting to abſolute monarchy than before — FOR this purpoſe they tried Calviniſm at Dort — AND then introduced Arminianiſm — AND depraved the morals of the people by the book of ſports.— INVENTED plots — AND then impoſed oaths — OF allegiance — SUPREMACY — SUBSCRIPTION, &c.—INCREASED eccleſiaſtical commiſſions —AND exerciſed inquiſitorial cruelty under them.

THE perſecuted puritans fled to Holland — IRELAND — AND America. — The parliament petitioned James againſt prelatical tyranny — AND for the puritans.—THEY ſaw popery — AND deſpotiſm — STRIDING apace over all the land.—JAMES is inflexible — HIS prelates worſe than himſelf. — THE puritans increaſe. — THE tyrant was ſuppoſed to be poiſoned — EXPIRES.

Finiſh

Finish — BY observing what episcopacy can do, when it has a head to its heart— AND by distinguishing between the interest of *a* church — AND of *the* church — AND the personal interests of ambitious men, who govern it. — A time-serving prelate is an object of pity — AS well as blame — HE buys his honours too dear.

LECTURE V.

The Constitution—officers—worship—and ceremonies of the Episcopal church.

INTRODUCTION.

A Religious society formed on principles of revelation — HAS no other rule of action than the express word of God — NATURAL worship resembles philosophical experiments — BUT revealed worship requires positive institute. — It is not enough that a thing is not forbidden — IT must be commanded.—CHRISTIAN faith is belief of a divine — revealed — truth — AND christian worship is obedience to a divine — written command.—S. Paul went on this ground, when he argued from the *silence* of scripture Heb. vii. 14.—AND when he affirmed the *perfection of revelation.* 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17.

REVELATION gives Christ an exclusive right of legislation—GOOD men entire liberty of conscience — AND all men the right of private judgment. — The episcopal church transferred all these rights to Harry and Elizabeth. — It put them in the place of God—AND all their successors in the condition of irrationals. — It admitted that dan-

dangerous first principle—HUMAN authority in religion — AND erected Anglican Episcopacy—ON what had alone supported popery —AND paganism.

THIS church is constituted of the whole nation—OF all ages—OF both sexes—OF all principles—OF no principles—OF all practises — AND professions — GOOD — BAD — AND indifferent.— ITS laws are canons — SOME confirmed by parliament— OTHERS not — ALL enforced by penal sanctions. — ITS support is worldly riches — SAVED out of the shipwreck of that pirate—THE pope. — ITS supreme head is a king — OR a queen— LUTHERAN—PRESBYTERIAN— PRELATICAL—OR popish.—It has existed under all—AND served the views of each.

THE officers of this church are all unknown to scripture. — THE same head is both the legislative— AND executive power.—UNDER him by commission are Archbishops—WHO superintend diocesan bishops —WHO have under them Deans—WHO are over canons — AND prebendaries — RECTORS — VICARS — CURATES. — THE first create the last — AND the last swear obedience to the first.—PRELATES are lords of parliament.—THEY have a sole power of ordination—CONFIRMATION—CONSECRATION—A secular power to issue out writs in

their

their own names—TO hold courts of judicature—TO ſentence without a jury—TO tranſact buſineſs relative to marriages—WILLS—ADMINISTRATIONS—AND for theſe purpoſes—THEY have courts—AND officers—CHANCELLORS—ARCH-DEACONS—COMMISSARIES—VICARS general—OFFICIALS—SURROGATES—PROCTORS—REGISTERS—APPARITORS, &c.—To deſcribe their names—POWER—EMPLOYMENTS, &c. would have puzzled the 12 inſpired apoſtles.

THE public worſhip of the epiſcopal church is by a ſtated liturgy—A defective book in every point of view.—ITS authority entirely human—IT is conducted partly by a prieſt—WHO reads—AND partly by the people—WHO make reſponſes—PARTLY in a deſk—PARTLY at the communion table, &c.—IN Cathedrals it is chanted.—IT is compoſed of genuine—AND apocryphal ſcriptures—CREEDS oppoſite to each other—PRAYERS of ſcripture—FATHERS—MASS-book—POLITICAL maxims—AND ſtate-deſigns.——INFANTS are queſtioned—BOYS are taught falſhoods—AND afterward confirmed—BREAD and wine are conſecrated—THE ſick are abſolved—SERVICES are ſaid for the Stuarts—HERETICKS are execrated—&c.——THERE are errors of every kind

kind in it—LITERARY—PHILOSOPHICAL—PHILOLOGICAL—THEOLOGICAL—THE very ſcriptures are burleſqued by being turned into queſtion and anſwer.——THE whole is unneceſſary—and unwarrantable—AND the impoſition of it deſpotical.

THE epiſcopal church claims a right of ordaining ceremonies—AND practiſes many—CONSECRATING places—BOWING to the eaſt—AND at the name of Jeſus—SPRINKLING infants—SIGNING with the ſign of the croſs—REQUIRING ſponſors—AFFECTING great pomp—AND myſtery at what they call the ſacrament—KNEELING to receive it.—THE actors all venerate certain habits—AS lawn ſleeves—SURPLICES—GOWNS—CASSOCKS—HOODS—&c.—OBSERVING—beſide Lord's days—ONE hundred and fifty holidays each year—CHRISTENING at the weſt end of their buildings—TAKING their ſacrament at the eaſt—READING in one place—PREACHING in another—DECORATING with pictures—ORGANS—BELLS—PUTTING on a ring in marriage—&c.——THE whole ritual is unordained by God—UNPROFITABLE in divine worſhip—EXPENSIVE—HETEROGENEOUS—AND hurtful to popular piety—BY employing the little time—AND capacities of the common people about trifles—GE-

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NERALLY rendered hateful to them by the ſlovenly manner in which they are performed.—WERE the ceremonies got decently through—THEY would be ſilly enough to take them for piety—WHICH now they hate for the ſake of its pretended garb.

Finiſh—BY accounting for the quiet acquieſcence of the bulk of the people in this kind of worſhip.——OBSERVE—that many never go—THAT numbers, who do, are totally ignorant—THAT many are intereſted, being paid for attending — IN various methods — THAT many people—YEA prieſts—complain—groan—and go on. —THAT people, who never once thought of religious liberty, make very good conformiſts—THAT they who aſpire at it are driven away.—THAT divine worſhip is a ſort of ſyſtem — MADE up of mental excellencies — AND expreſſed by cautious — commanded—obedience.—— THAT it requires induſtry—LABOUR—EXAMINATION — to acquire theſe.—THAT moſt men love eaſe—AND prefer a quiet ſubmiſſion to what is——before a diligent ſearch of what ought to be. — THAT, however, to hold communion on condition of putting out an eye—is a reproach — TO him who propoſes — AND to him, who yields to it.——NONCONFORMITY then is juſtifiable. See 1 Sam. xi. 1, &c.

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LECTURE VI.

History of the times of Charles I.

INTRODUCTION.

ONE capital artifice of high-churchmen is to impute their own vices to others—AND to impute other people's excellencies to themſelves.—EPISCOPACY has not varied from the day kings created it.—IT has always been a hireling ſtate of ſervitude.—WHEN it ſerves prerogative it produces national calamities—AND then transfers the guilt to others. — WHEN the people force it not to diſſerve the cauſe of civil liberty — IT complains at firſt — AND at laſt boldly atrributes beneficial conſequences to itſelf. — IT generates infidelity and immorality — AND when learned and laborious writers reſcue religion from both —IT publiſhes ſixpenny annual ſermons — AND a few trite eſſays—AND runs away with the whole applauſe.

CHARLES came to the crown under great diſadvantages — HIS education had been perverted—HIS capacity was none of the beſt — HIS temper gloomy — HIS notions of government deſpotical.—UXORIOUSNESS

AND favouritiſm—led him to fill up his meaſure.—HIS father left him weak ſtateſmen—AND wicked churchmen—A council table — A ſtar chamber — AND a high-commiſſion-court — A diſcontented parliament—AND an oppreſſed people all divided into endleſs factions — WORK for a wiſe prince in the hands of a weak one. — THIS was what James's king-craft came to!

LAUD—NEILE—MONTAGUE—MANWARING—SIBTHORPE — AND other ſuch ſlaviſh tools of deſpotiſm — endeavoured by all means to render the king abſolute — THEY perſecuted the puritans — RESTRAINED the liberty of the preſs — ADVISED the king to reign without law — PALLIATED popery—ELEVATED Arminianiſm—AND drove the nation to ſide with the puritans — IN order to ſtem a torrent of civil deſpotiſm.

CHARLES and Laud revived the book of ſports — SUPPRESSED lecturers — AND encouraged ignorance — AIMED to unite the epiſcopal and papal churches—IMPOSED a liturgy on the Scots. — PURITANS fled to New England. — THE Engliſh were oppreſſed with proclamations inſtead of laws. — THE Scotch were dragooned — THE Iriſh maſſacred.—THE prelates—AND the court clergy were the only perſons not harraſſed—

raſſed — THEY fattened on the vitals of their country.— THEY defeated the reformation—RUINED commerce—DISSOLVED, the conſtitution—AND obliged the parliament to ſuppreſs prelacy for the nation's ſafety — AND to take up arms againſt Charles the patron of prelacy and tyranny —TO ſecure the lives—LIBERTIES—AND properties —OF the whole Britiſh empire.

CHARLES had three favourite ſchemes — AND all his adminiſtration was directed towards the eſtabliſhment of them.—1. RAISING the power of the crown above law.— 2. EXTENDING epiſcopacy over all his dominions—AS that ſyſtem of religion which beſt ſerved arbitrary power. — 3. THE total ſuppreſſion of puritaniſm—AS a ſyſtem tending to excite free inquiry — HIGH notions of popular rights — HUMAN dignity — AND general freedom — AND ſo to produce what he called ſedition.

REVIEW of epiſcopacy.—IT is a ſhrewd prejudice againſt it, that the moſt arbitrary of our princes have diſcovered the greateſt fondneſs for it — AS if it ſerved their deſigns better than any other ſyſtem called religion.—WHILE it was a creature of the pope it promoted papal tyranny — WHEN the Britiſh crown adopted it, it increaſed deſpotiſm and tyranny.— IT muſt of neceſ-

ſity ſerve its creator, for it is only for the ſake of ſervice. — FROM its riſe to its ſuppreſſion it poſſeſſed but little learning — LESS moderation — NO notion of civil liberty — AND *piety* is out of the queſtion. — IT has ſtood in its utmoſt ſplendor without any of them all—CONSEQUENTLY learning, liberty, humanity and piety are not eſſential component parts of it. — THE ſame principle, implicit obedience to ſuperiors, that makes it do any thing right, will oblige it to do every thing wrong.— THEIR cant of no biſhop no king is a bold — impudent falſhood — FOR our monarchy is independent on the being of epiſcopacy—INDEED, no king no biſhop is true —FOR epiſcopacy is not upheld by argument—REASON—SCRIPTURE—FREE election of people—BUT it is ſupported by authority at a vaſt expence. — IT is neither of divine — NOR human right — BUT it is a human wrong ſuppreſſive of divine — AND human rights.

Finiſh—BY diſtinguiſhing perſons from things — BISHOPS from epiſcopacy — AND ſhew that ſtrictly ſpeaking prelates are objects diſtinguiſhable from prelacy — SOME prelates like ſome chriſtians have never entered into the ſpirit of their profeſſion— AND as chriſtianity is laudable—BUT ſome

chriſtians

christians are execrable — so some prelates may be laudable — BUT all prelacy is execrable, for it is composed of secular pomp —AND civil power—in matters of religion —WHICH belongs to neither.—COMMEND the ingenuousness of those prelates — WHO have execrated intolerance. — APPLAUD those—WHO have acknowledged the defects of their constitution.—AND blame their pusillanimity — FOR not daring to act on the very principles — WHICH they propagated. HENCE derive an argument against the constitution itself — IT cripples some — AND shackles all.

LECTURE VII.

The terms of Communion—nomination of officers —and discipline of the episcopal church.

INTRODUCTION.

THE preface to the episcopal liturgy calls it *divine* service — AND quaintly adds — the first original was ordained by the ancient *Fathers*.—EVERY thing in this community has been blasphemously put to God's account. — THERE was the divine right of kings — THE divine right of bishops—THE divine right of tithes — AND now here is a *book* of divine right. — HOWEVER, like other divine things — IT may be examined—REASON—AND religion require it.

THE terms of admission to membership —AND the ministry — ARE calculated so as to render examination useless — OR dangerous. — INFANTS are admitted — IN publick — OR private — BY dipping — OR sprinkling—ANSWERING interrogatories by proxy. — PROXIES are even required for adults—WHO are admitted on their own profession of faith. — MINISTERS are admitted by subscribing thirty-nine heterogeneous — ABSTRUSE—HUMAN articles—BY declaring that

that the books of ordination — AND common-prayer — ARE agreeable to the word of God — THAT the two books of Homilies contain a godly — AND wholesome doctrine — AND by swearing such obedience to a Lord bishop as 141 canons require. — SOME of their divines say the articles are Arminian—OTHERS say they are Calvinistick. — SOME say they subscribe to the words—OTHERS say to the sense—SOME say to their own—AND others to that of the compilers—OTHERS again in no sense — THEY subscribe them as articles of peace — NOT of truth.—THE whole affair of subscription is a miserable scene of prevarication.

THE episcopal church imposes ministers on parishes without the people's consent—HENCE no emulation in the priests—NOR the least aspiration after freedom in the people — YET they call themselves clergy — THAT is—ministers chosen by lot.—THE king—OR queen — for the time being — CHOOSES all the bishops—ALL the deans in England — ALL the prebendaries — AND many rectors. — THE Lord Chancellor chooses many —THE Bishops choose the Welch Deans—THE Archdeacons—MANY Rectors — VICARS, &c. — NOBILITY — AND gentry — have right of patronage —

AND all present without the consent of the people.—ALL this arrangement is for purposes of civil government — OR rather for purposes of the regal prerogative — AND it despoils priests — AND people alike of religious liberty.

THE discipline of this corporation is the most irregular — AND tyrannical — THAT can well be in this country.—NUMBERS of ministers — AND members — WHO disbelieve the doctrines of the creeds — AND practise all immoralities—LIVE quietly—YEA obtain the highest preferment in it. — SOME of the most wicked are obliged to receive their sacrament as a qualification for office. — THIS corporation punishes in spiritual courts — TRUE inquisitions — WHERE lay-chancellors are judges — FROM whose decrees there lies no appeal. — THE punishments are fines—IMPRISONMENTS—DEPRIVATIONS—PENANCES—COMMUTATIONS of pennance—EXCOMMUNICATIONS—EVEN of those who were never of the community.—THE excommunicated are excluded from the publick worship—CUT off from giving evidence — RECOVERING property by law — CHRISTIAN burial, &c. — ALL this cruel polity is varnished over with spirituality — AND divinity. —IN the name of God — Amen — A spiritual Lord — BY divine

divine providence —— IN a ſpiritual court —PLAYS the devil — AND calls the bloody farce a divine ſervice — EXACTLY as Chriſt foretold. John xvi. 2.

THERE have been ſeven attempts to reform this church—THE firſt was the Hampton-court conference in the reign of James I. — THE ſecond in Charles I. time — BY Uſher's reduction of epiſcopacy — THE third at the return of Charles II. in the Savoy conference — THE fourth in the ſame reign — under lord keeper Bridgman — THE fifth in the ſame reign—AND a ſixth — A ſeventh under William III. — ALL theſe attempts proved abortive by the ſame means.—THE affair exactly reſembled the council of Trent—PRELATES—WHO were parties — WERE judges in both —WHITGIFT — LAUD—SHELDON—MORLEY—WARD — SPRAT — AND others like them —always did — AND always will — SACRIFICE chriſtianity to ſave epiſcopacy — AND create ten thouſand infidels — RATHER than give up one uſeleſs ceremony.

Finiſh — BY enlarging on Baron Monteſquieu's conceſſion — " That the proteſtant religion is more favourable to a ſpirit of LIBERTY than the catholick."— Obſerve—THAT deſpotiſm is the deſideratum of moſt princes. — THAT popery is highly

highly fitted to ſerve their views. — THAT they have protected popery for this — AND not for religious reaſons. — THAT they have perſecuted non-conformiſts for their religious ſentiments, merely becauſe they ſuppoſed them to include ſomething injurious to arbitrary power.—THAT an army of hireling prieſts is a very convenient machine of government. — THAT our own hiſtory too well ſhews what they can do— BY ſhewing what they have done—UNDER the Stuarts.— THAT — ſo much epiſcopacy in a ſtate — ſo much deſpotiſm — is a certain truth. —THAT univerſal — EQUAL —liberty is incompatible with prelacy.— THAT the non-conformiſt's principles of government are thoſe of the beſt ſtateſmen. —THAT to inculcate them in the church is the beſt preſervative of the ſtate — AND that attempts to reform is allowing on the epiſcopalian ſide a great part of what we affirm.

LECTURE VIII.

The State of Religion during the Civil Wars, and the Protectorate.

CHARLES, chagrined at the unpliableneſs of his parliament, fled — AND reſolved in council to paſs no more bills — TO pawn the crown jewels for ready money — TO purchaſe arms and ammunition — TO employ the pope's nuncio to hire foreign troops to enſlave his own ſubjects. — THIS obliged the parliament to ſecure magazines — TO provide for the national ſafety — TO get command of the navy — AND the militia — AND to form alliance with the Scotch.

THE nation petitioned parliament for redreſs of grievances — THE parliament the king — BUT he full of duplicity — AND inflexibility — DENIED — OR deceived them — in all — RAISED forces — PROVIDED arms — AND began a war. — THE parliament aboliſhed epiſcopacy — RAISED an army — AND defended their rights.

THE parliament thought the civil magiſtracy might ſet up what religion they thought moſt conducive to the good of the ſtate. — THEY, therefore, reformed uni-

verſities

verſities — AND cathedrals — ENFORCED the ſabbath—SUPPRESSED publick diverſions — ORDAINED faſts — AND religious exerciſes — AND a great reformation of manners followed. — THE king's army remarkably profane — THAT of the parliament very ſober. — CHARLES publiſhed proclamations — THE puritan clergy refuſed to read them — AND the king's ſoldiers plundered them for their refuſal. — THE epiſcopal clergy refuſed to obey parliament orders — AND they alſo were plundered in their turn. — GOOD and bad were involved in the publick calamity.— THIS produced committees for ſcandalous miniſters — PLUNDERED miniſters — &c. —RESTRAINTS of the preſs, &c.

THE parliament called the aſſembly of divines — TO reform the church — AND invited the Scots to aſſiſt them — THE Scots agreed on condition of their eſtabliſhing preſbyterian church government — AND for that purpoſe ſwearing to the ſolemn league and covenant—WHICH was accordingly ſubſcribed by both houſes — THE clergy — AND laity — AND impoſed on moſt epiſcopalians — BUT not on ſome, who were ſuppoſed free from arbitrary principles.

THE

THE assembly addressed — AND were approved by foreign churches — THEY ordained ministers — THE parliament nominated to livings — AND ejected their enemies from livings — AND universities. — THE assembly published a directory instead of the old liturgy — AND the parliament put down Christmas — AND other festivals — TRIED and executed Laud — AND tried various measures for accommodation with the king.

THE king was in arms for arbitrary power — THE cavaliers for the episcopal church — THE Scots for covenant uniformity — BUT Cromwell possessed the art of overpowering all by becoming the patron of all, who wished for civil and religious liberty — AND managed all with indefatigable address.

The unhappy Charles was an incorrigible tyrant — AND deserved to die — BUT they, who put him to death, had no constitutional right to do so. — NO religious party was the cause of his death — ALL remonstrated against it — AND he fell a sacrifice to military power — BY the hands of a few desperate officers — AND their dependents — WHO were of various religious denominations.

CROMWELL

CROMWELL was an aſtoniſhing man — HIS capacity was uncommon — HIS addreſs infinite — HIS courage undaunted — HIS principles of government juſt and liberal — HIS religion doubtful.—HE poſſeſſed all the qualifications of a chief magiſtrate — EXCEPT that of free popular election to govern. — HE was an uniform patron of religious liberty. —— NECESSITY — NOT equity governed ſome of his actions againſt his principles. — SOME peculiar maxims rendered his conduct inconſiſtent.

CROMWELL and his army petition for toleration — QUARREL with the parliament — FORCIBLY diſſolve it — ASSUME the government — CALL the little parliament — A council of officers make him protector — HE calls another parliament — DISSOLVES them — TOLERATES all except papiſts and royaliſts --- KEEPS them under for civil reaſons — MODELS parliaments — UNIVERSITIES — ARMY — NAVY — FOREIGN treaties -- AND all branches of government ſo as to render *himſelf* neceſſary to all. — PROJECTS an union of all the reformed. — INTENDS to reſtore monarchy — AND unite it with univerſal liberty — TO wear a crown — AND tranſmit it to his family — BUT death prevented the execution of his plan.

Finiſh

Finish—BY distinguishing first principles of government—FROM social contracts for the preservation of them—ORDINARY obedience to establish courses of law—FROM extraordinary recourses to first principles, when social contracts are in danger of dissolution.

LECTURE IX.

A View of Presbyterian Church-government.

RELIGIOUS tyranny subsists in various degrees—AS all civil tyrannies do.—POPERY is the consummation of it—AND presbyterianism a weak degree of it—BUT the latter has in it the essence of the former — AND differs from it only as a kept mistress differs from a street-walking prostitute — OR as a musquet differs from a cannon.

THE reformed church at Geneva was the parent of the other reformed churches — AND this rendered presbyterianism odious to monarchs—IT was supposed to be formed on republican principles.—AND for the same reason it was always offensive to the people—AS it was supposed to be—AND really is — A kind of ecclesiastical aristocracy—EXCLUDING both the monarch — AND the people — AND placing church-government in the hands of a select few.

ALL church affairs in presbyterian governments are managed — IN some places by two — AND in others by three — ASSEMBLIES — THE first is a consistory — OR presbytery — within each congregation.—

THE

THE ſecond a ſynod — OR a provincial aſſembly—CONSISTING of deputies from the ſeveral conſiſtories. — THE third is a general — OR national aſſembly — MADE up of deputies from the ſynods.—APPEALS lie from the conſiſtory to the ſynod—AND from the ſynod to the general aſſembly — WHOSE ſentence is final. — JOHN KNOX eſtabliſhed this in Scotland — THE Scots brought it into England — AND the long parliament eſtabliſhed it here — IN lieu of epiſcopacy. — IT is equally intolerant with epiſcopacy — AND cannot ſtand without civil power. — IT is ſomewhat remarkable that popery in Canada — EPISCOPACY in England — AND preſbyterianiſm in Scotland — ARE all three *eſtabliſhed* religions in the dominions of the king of Great Britain.

VARIOUS reformed churches have adopted various forms of church-government — BUT all are reducible to three — SIMILAR to civil governments. — POPERY — AND epiſcopacy — ARE abſolute monarchies—PRESBYTERIANISM is ariſtocracy— AND ſome independent churches are democratical — BUT all adopt *one* grand error — PRODUCTIVE of *two* great evils—WHICH generate ten thouſand more—ALL nefarious.

THE great and fountain error is the considering of *conscience* as a subject of *human* government. — THIS notion produces two great evils. — 1. LEGISLATION — NOW all human *legislation* is oppressive to conscience—AND it is immaterial where this power is lodged—IT is tyranny any where. — 2. ENFORCING laws made by Jesus Christ — BY *penal* sanctions. — IN popery — AND episcopacy — BOTH the legislative and executive power are lodged in the same person.—PRESBYTERIANISM is exactly like them — AND only swears the civil magistrate to do the worst part of the work.— FROM these two evils — MAKING laws for conscience — AND then executing them — OR — executing laws made by Jesus Christ by coercive measures — PROCEED confusion — AND every evil work.

To spread the faith — AND to extirpate hereticks — AND schismaticks — ARE only pretences — IN the mouths of popes — AND princes.—THEY have secular views— AND have given innumerable evidences — THAT they know no heresy but patriotism —AND no orthodoxy but despotism.—BUT it was not thus with Calvin — KNOX — CRANMER—AND other reformers—THEY were sincerely mad with intolerance — AND seriously possessed with the rage of converting

THE great and flourishing error is the confounding of religion and the subject of civil government, — I say, when united, produce two great evils. — I. EXPATIATION — NOW, human *legislation* is oppressive to conscience — AND it is immaterial where this power is lodged — it is tyranny anywhere.

2. ENFORCING laws made by Jesus Christ — BY penal sanctions — IN popery — AND episcopacy — serve the legislative and executive power well — in the same union — PRESBYTERIANS exactly take them — AND only wears the civil magistrate to do the worst part of the work. — FROM these two evils — MAKING laws for conscience — AND then executing them — IN — executing laws made by Jesus Christ by coercive measures — PROCEED corruption — AND every evil work.

To spread the faith — AND to extirpate heretics — AND schismatics — ARE only pretences — IN the mouths of popes — AND princes. — I AM with Scripture — AND have given immutable evidence — THAT they know no doctrine but pure truth — AND no orthodoxy but eloquence. — But it was not done with Calvin — NOR — CRANMER — AND other reformers — THEY were sincerely and with forbearance — AND cruelly polluted with the rage of conversing

verting by force.—IT was pity they had not paufed—AND thought oftener!

Finifh — BY a retrofpect. — Obferve — THAT ecclefiaftical hiftory in the days of Chrift — AND his apoftles — IS an exhibition of every humane — AND generous fentiment. —— THAT it has been fince a fcene of infinite woe. — THAT the papal apoftacy loft the fpirit of chriftianity — AND imbibed that of the devil. — THAT the reformers came fmarting — AND feeling their way out of that bad fchool. — THAT fecular powers affociated with them to renounce popery — AND to form an oppofition againft it. — THAT the word *toleration* was not then known — NOR any idea of it—adopted by thofe reformers. — THAT —in a word—they were commendable for going fo far — AND that we fhould be unpardonable for going no further. — THAT one word of S. Paul is a better body of what they call church-polity—THAN all the fhip-loads of laws — AND canons — THAT have been fince made — THAT word is — STUDY TO BE QUIET.

LECTURE X.

State of Religion from the Restoration to the Revolution.

CHARLES II. was a polite — DISSIPATED — gentleman — OF humane principles—BUT of no religion. — WHEN the nation restored him, they aimed to realize Oliver's plan of monarchy and liberty in Charles — WHOSE inclination was good — AND his title unexceptionable. —— ACCORDINGLY civil liberty was very much advanced in this reign — AND so would religious liberty — HAD not the revival of episcopacy defeated the design.—BUT these old sinners, episcopalians, not become wise by affliction—FELL to their former practices again. — THEY soothed the king — AND first deceived — AND then destroyed the puritans.

CHARLES published a declaration for liberty of conscience — WHICH the parliament would have enacted — BUT the prelates acted the farce of a conference at the Savoy — TAXED the puritans with shamplots — RENDERED them suspected by government — AND by the basest arts got the act of uniformity passed —WHICH ejected above

above 2000 miniſters.—THEN followed the conventicle act — THE Oxford act — UNDER all which CLARENDON — SHELDON — WARD—AND other biſhops—IMPRISONED and murdered 8000 — IMPOVERISHED and ruined thouſands of families — DROVE multitudes into Holland — AND America — AND robbed them of 12 — or 14 millions of property. — THE king — AND the parliament — OFTEN endeavoured to give them liberty — BUT their deſigns were fruſtrated by the prelates and the clergy —— WHO preached the *divine* right of kings — BISHOPS — AND tithes — PASSIVE obedience and non-reſiſtance —— AND invented new church holidays for the purpoſe of propagating their ſeditious doctrines — WHILE they overwhelmed the nation with impiety — AND immorality. — THE few ſcholars — AND good men of the party — HAD received their education from puritans in the time of the civil wars.

JAMES II. was an arbitrary governor — A determined papiſt. — HE aſſumed a diſpenſing power — AND aimed to bring in popery — FOR which purpoſe he publiſhed two declarations of indulgence — IN order to engage the nonconformiſts on his ſide. — MANY of them refuſed an unconſtitutional

tional liberty—WHICH the parliament durſt not enact for fear of popery — WHICH the king — AND the prelates had prepared too many to receive. — MANY prelates ſhewed more inclination to popery — THAN to nonconformity — AND continued their bloody meaſures of church-polity.

JAMES and his bloody counſellor Jefferies brought the epiſcopal clergy into the moſt terrible dilemma — THEY had ever aſſerted abſolute royal ſupremacy over conſcience — AND now the ſupreme head of their proteſtant church was a furious papiſt — WHO erected an eccleſiaſtical commiſſion — AND appointed ſome popiſh commiſſioners to reform their church. — THE prelates had indefatigably taught for the laſt twenty years paſſive obedience — AND non-reſiſtance — AND now, according to their own doctrine, neither parliament — CLERGY — NOR laity might reſiſt the meaſures of this deſperate tyrant. — AT length he perſecuted ſome prelates — AND both the univerſities — VIOLATED corporation-charters — AND diſſolved the contracts of ſociety — AND many prelates juſtified him — ONLY ſeven ventured to addreſs him — AND courted the nonconformiſts — AFFECTING to relent — AND proteſting like mariners in a ſtorm how

how good they would be when they got out of their diſtreſs.

THE non-conformiſts were courted by both the king — AND the people — THEY were powerful enough to turn the ſcale either way.—THEY ſacrificed their juſt indignation againſt the cruel prelates to national ſafety — THREW their weight into the ſcale of liberty — AND went moſt heartily into the project of a revolution. — THE prince of Orange came by invitation — THE cowardly deſpot fled — THE houſe voted the throne vacant — BUT when it was debated whether to fill the throne with a regent or a king — THE latter was carried by only two votes — TWELVE or thirteen prelates voted for the former — AND only two for the latter — THEY pretended to abide firmly bound by oath to an abdicated tyrant — WHO had broken all his oaths to them. — THEY had preached him into theſe terrible circumſtances — HAD taught that reſiſtance was damnable — THE king's character indelible — THEIR lives and fortunes at his diſpoſal — AND had conſidered the whole nation as the property of a tyrant — INALIENABLE in his family — TO be tranſmitted from father to ſon — LIKE a herd of cattle to be fed — WORKED — OR butchered

butchered — AS their mafter pleafed. —— THEY called this the doctrine of the *epifcopal church* — AND of Jefus Chrift — AND kept up a faction on account of it through the two next reigns.

LEC-

LECTURE XI.

A view of modern Nonconformity.

INTRODUCTION.

IT is a peculiar excellence of truth and virtue to become more lucid and demonſtrative by exerciſe — HENCE the wiſeſt of men ſaid, The path of the juſt is as the ſhining light, that ſhineth more and more unto the perfect day. — NONCONFORMITY to human appointments in religion — is a courſe of this kind. — THERE are ſtronger arguments for it now than ever. — IT is grounded now on new — AND enlarged principles. — IT is ſupported by new additional arguments — ADORNED by many new examples — DIVESTED of its ſuperfluities. — IT has been tried — AND found practicable — AND praiſe-worthy. — ITS enemies remain inflexible — AND epiſcopalians are incurable — SO that time has proved the fault lies in the *conſtitution* itſelf. —— ITS principles have been realized in civil government — AND accredited by the benefits produced. — ITS evidence dawned at the reformation — AND has gradually brightened to demonſtration — TO meridian-day.

NUMBER.

The number of partizans. in many caſes prove nothing — AS in communities where the people cannot — OR may not — think for themſelves — BUT in our communities — WHERE no ſecular intereſt warps — AND where ſtrong temptations attack — WHERE inquiry is free — AND men actually examine — NUMBERS are conſiderable. — THE preſent body conſiſts of Baptiſts — GENERAL — AND particular.—INDEPENDENTS — PRESBYTERIANS — MORE ſtrictly independents, who occupy ſuch meeting-houſes as were preſbyterian formerly — THE people called Quakers. — THERE are in England and Wales about 1400 congregations of the three firſt denominations — THE largeſt third of which is baptiſt — THE quakers are numerous — THE whole is at leaſt one fifth of the nation.

LEARNING.

THE modern Diſſenters poſſeſs men of eminent literature — IN every branch of ſcience. — STUDENTS have the advantages of ſchools — ACADEMIES — TUTORS — LIBRARIES — INSTRUMENTS. — THEY have ſtrong inducements to ſtudy — LEARNING is reputable to all — AND neceſſary to ſome

— FOR the miniſtry — AND for ſupport. — THE conſtitution of our churches is friendly to learning — FOR it has no ſecular intereſts and eccleſiaſtical honours to decoy ſtudents from books into the world — NOR any unnatural eſtabliſhments to ſupport — BY reſtraints — WRONG biaſſes — AND perverſe reaſons. — WE can go without danger — WHERE-EVER inveſtigation can carry us.

POLITICAL SENTIMENTS.

MODERN nonconformity naturally leads us to ſtudy government. — SIDNEY — LOCKE—MONTESQUIEU — BECCARIA — teach the notions — WHICH we hold — of government. — ALL think *the people* the origin of power — ADMINISTRATORS reſponſible truſtees — AND the enjoyment of life — LIBERTY — AND property — THE right of all mankind — EXCEPT of thoſe, whoſe crimes are allowed by the conſtitution to have disfranchiſed them. — EQUITY requires them to give up as much of their own as they have deprived others of. — WE differ — AS others do — concerning the beſt mode of government — BUT no one has ever attempted to ſubvert that which is eſtabliſhed — OR even wiſhes to do ſo — AND all contribute chearfully to ſupport it. — OUR brethren the Quakers ſeem to conſider

eſtabliſhed prieſts as privateers — AND their church as a kind of letter of marque veſſel — ALLOWED by authority indeed to plunder a ſuppoſed enemy—AND to make repriſals — BUT having no equitable — CONSTITUTIONAL claim — ON their property. — THE notion is certainly juſt — PERHAPS not prudent to act upon it — HOWEVER it is no way hoſtile to civil government — FOR they ſubmit when civil governors interpoſe.

PROPERTY.

THE property of the diſſenters is very conſiderable. — PUBLICK property conſiſts of funds — ESTATES — ENDOWMENTS — SUBSCRIPTIONS — FOR the uſe of ſchools —UNIVERSITIES—MINISTERS——ABLE — AND diſable — POOR, &c. — PRIVATE property large — FOR their religion keeps them from many expenſive vices. — NONCONFORMITY keeps them from many heavy epiſcopal exactions — CLERICAL feaſts — SUBSCRIPTIONS — MISSIONS — &c.—RELIGION alſo makes them frugal — INDUSTRIOUS — AND commercial. — So that their property is more than equal to their wants.

CHURCH-POLITY.

THE wiſeſt in the world for ſix reaſons. — 1. IT is unconnected with every thing except religion, — 2. IT is unſupported by irreligious motives — AND left wholly to conſcience — SO that it is by principle — OR it is not at all. — 3. SCRIPTURE is ſole law. — 4. CONSCIENCE is its *own* judge of the ſenſe of ſcripture — AND thus the ſource of virtue is kept clean — 5. COERCION of all kinds is inadmiſſible. — 6. IT deſpiſes the cant of hereſy — SCHISM — CLERGY — THE church — EASE to doubting conſciences — CONVENTICLES — SPIRITUAL lords — COURTS — LAWS — &c. — BY all which their anceſtors were ſpiritualized out of their lives by faggots and fires. — THE nonconformiſts are — WITH all their infirmities — THE excellent of the earth, in whom is all our delight. — PEACE is within their walls — PROSPERITY in their palaces!

LECTURE XII.

From the Revolution to the accession of George III.

WILLIAM III. was a serious — GRAVE presbyterian — A friend to religious liberty. — HE passed the act of toleration — AND proposed a comprehension of all his protestant subjects — BUT all his good designs were frustrated by prelates — PRIESTS — AND tories — WHO were all enemies to the revolution — SOME of them non-jurors — AND who defeated every design of liberty by the old artifice — PROPOSED by Tillotson — OF ecclesiastical commissions — AND convocations.—THEIR attachment to arbitrary principles was dangerous to church — AND state — AND their conduct to a presbyterian deliverer — AND to nonconformist coadjutors — COLOURED with the blackest villany — AND ingratitude.

QUEEN Ann went as she was led. — IN her first years she pursued the late king's measures — IN her last those of the tories — AND intolerant prelates. — DURING both these reigns the ruling clergy pursued intolerant measures. — UNDER specious pretences

tences of moderation — THEY veered about to all points of the compaſs — SAID and unſaid — DID and undid — BUT never departed from their own worldly intereſt.

REFLECT on the characters of the prelates of thoſe times — TILLOTSON — TENNISON — STILLINGFLEET — SHERLOCK — &c. — REMARK the cant of — THE church — THE clergy — DISSENTING teachers — CONVENTICLES — SCHISM — REASON — SCRUPULOUS conſciences — &c. — DISTINGUISH between conſtitutional and accidental deformity. — DISSENTERS may be accidentally intolerant — BUT epiſcopacy is conſtitutional dominion over conſcience — HENCE Burnets — AND Hoadlys — AND other tolerant prelates — PREACH rightly — BUT in vain — NOBODY is relieved by their declamations — THEY live down their own doctrine — FIND apologies — AND ſalvos — AND ſubtil diſtinctions neceſſary — AND do much damage to religion by inventing and publiſhing them.

THE acceſſion of the preſent royal family was favourable to liberty. — THEIR majeſties have always protected the toleration — BEFRIENDED the diſſenters — AND execrated intolerance — BUT prelacy has hitherto defeated all liberal attempts towards religious liberty. —— CHARACTERS of Archbiſhops

Wake—POTTER—HERRING—SECKER—ALL of whom have risqued christianity to preserve the establishment — HAVE striven to *lose* rather than to *answer* arguments for religious liberty —— AND have uniformly aimed to discountenance free inquiry — AND to disguise — AND perpetuate church-tyranny — AND this under the auspices of the best of princes — WHO have placed their glory in the felicity of their subjects.

PRESENT state of the dissenters is servile to episcopalians — LAWS that concern them divided into three classes — THE first disqualify our *gentry* — RICH merchants — MANUFACTURERS — AND tradesmen — AND deprive them of civil rights. — THE second oppress our *ministers* with oaths — FINES — SUBSCRIPTIONS — AND penalties of several cruel kinds. — THE third oblige our *schoolmasters* to conform against conviction — AND conscience — AND spend their malevolent force on our innocent children — BY dooming them to ignorance — OR error and vice — THUS by tithes actually paid — AND by gains denied — DISSENTERS — WHO are spoiled by episcopal tyranny — CONTRIBUTE more in proportion to the support of it than they do — WHO profit by it.

SUM up the whole by observing — THAT popery is despotism in the highest degree —

THAT

THAT prelacy is popery restrained by civil power: — THAT nonconformity is reason and religion — FRIENDLY to civil polity — — AND hostile only to a *constitution* of tyranny — AND not to those, who support it. — THAT monarchy would stand safer without the incumbrance of episcopacy — THAN with it. — THAT the entire abolition of prelacy is to be effected without *any* civil inconvenience—AND with great advantages to the nation — AND to religion. — THAT the claim of dominion over conscience is an usurpation of Christ's prerogative — THAT his gospel is calculated for the destruction of it — THAT in God's due time it will effect it, according to the sure word of prophesy — THAT till then the servants of Christ must prophesy in sackcloth — AND that they who do so merit the highest esteem here — AND will shine with peculiar glory hereafter.

The manner of using these Notes.

WE will suppose a number of young persons, more or less, assembled and seated in the meeting-vestry, the minister's house or some convenient room borrowed or hired for the purpose, at six o'clock. We will suppose each to have in his pocket this lecture-book interleaved with blank-paper; a pencil for the purpose of adding on the blank leaves additional thoughts, arguments, and references, to be made by the minister; and Mr. Palmer's Catechism for the sake of ampler enlargements on topicks only just touched in these notes.

We will suppose — that the minister enters precisely at the appointed time — that he silently pay his respects to the company and they to him — that he then goes to a small desk at the upper end of the room — kneel down with the company and beg in a short prayer the blessing of God on his endeavours — and then stand up and deliver his lecture — his auditors standing or sitting as they think proper.

Far be it from me to presume to dictate, or even to imagine that these rules are important, or the book itself necessary to our ministers,

miniſters. I have only put down their own thoughts to ſpare them the trouble of doing ſo, and to direct and aſſiſt our young people, who may be deſirous of information on the moſt minute articles of form as well as power of acquiring religious knowledge. I truſt theſe young catechumens will forgive my freedom. I only conſider myſelf as an inconſiderable errand-goer in the church of God.

To convey my meaning leſs obſcurely, I have written the firſt word of each new period in capital letters; and, I ſuppoſe, the following example from the beginning of the firſt Lecture may ſerve to ſhew how a miniſter would form the ſkeleton into a body, or how a young man may do ſo at home in his cloſet for his own private edification.

LECTURE I.

The doctrine of free religious inquiry, &c.

Brethren,

It was a juſt and beautiful idea, which the royal pſalmiſt entertained of religion, when he called it *inquiring in Jehovah's temple.* Thus he ſpeaks in the twenty-ſeventh pſalm, a pſalm written in trouble, and

and ſtrongly expreſſive of that felicity, which revealed religion affords to good men under the heavieſt of all afflictions, thoſe I mean, which concern the ſoul. Ignorance of God; frailty of nature; limits of condition; variety and ſpecioufneſs of error; probability of annihilation or deſtruction; all theſe excite troubles in the minds of thoughtful men, and if they be miſerable who can only conjecture concerning them, what muſt others be, who do not even aſpire at the ſmall conſolation of conjecturing?

David implies two things in the expreſſion juſt now mentioned. Firſt, a right of inquiry in the people. The people of God, the Jewiſh church, and before them the patriarchal church, always enjoyed this privilege. Their religion conſiſted of articles to be believed, and injunctions to be performed. Theſe were preached by Enoch, Noah, Moſes, and the prophets, that is to ſay, they were propoſed to the people firſt with evidence for examination, and laſt upon conviction for obſervation; for religion, which God required of them, is a reaſonable ſervice, an exerciſe of judgment and conſcience and not a courſe of mere animal motion. I ſaid, the Jews enjoyed this privilege: but ſtrictly ſpeaking it is a native

tive human right, that belongs to all mankind. Barbarian, Scythian, bond and free are all alike formed capable of making inquiſition, and all poſſeſs ſtrong natural emotions, and powerful exterior inducements, impelling them to make it: but as this right was not claimed by ſome pagans, and diſallowed by ſome religions; and as it was both claimed, allowed and gratified by people under revealed ſyſtems, ſo I ventured to call it a privilege. Indeed to inquire where none can anſwer, although it be a human right, is yet nothing more than a right to pain. Where ſatisfaction is attainable by inquiry, the exerciſe of it is privilege and pleaſure.

Revealed religion, (and this is the ſecond thing implied,) revealed religion is ſufficient to anſwer all reaſonable inquiry. The temple contained the law, and the law contained anſwers even to inquiſitive children *When your children ſay unto you, What mean you by this ſervice? that ye ſhall ſay, It is the ſacrifice of the Lord's paſſover, who paſſed over the houſes of the children of Iſrael in Egypt, when he ſmote the Egyptians and delivered our houſes.* Exod. xii. 26.

What fit queſtion can be propoſed concerning religious truth, which revelation does

does not anſwer? Do we inquire, is there a God? &c. &c.

This is ſufficient to convey our meaning. The ſubjects may be varied, enlarged, abbreviated, illuſtrated, proved, a thouſand different ways. It is one chief advantage of ſuch analyſes as theſe, that each idea may be clothed elegantly, plainly, or coarſely, according to the genius of the lecturer and the conditions of the auditors. If the ideas be conveyed, the end is anſwered, be the ſtyle whatever it may.

Dublin 16th July 1830

A Liſt of Books on theſe ſubjects

Neal's Hiſtory of the Puritans.
Robertſon's Hiſtory of Charles V.
Delaune's Plea.
Calamy's Abridgment by Palmer.
Palmer's Catechiſm.
Oldmixion's Hiſtories.
Writers on the Diſſenters late application to parliament, ſuch as Drs. Stennet, Kippis, Wilton, Meſſrs. Toulmin, &c. &c.
Confeſſional, and the ſeveral pieces occaſioned by it.
Locke on government, and others of the ſame claſs.
Beccaria, Herport, Moſheim, Croſby, &c. &c.
Sermons of Gale, Bradbury, Watts, Foſter, &c. &c. &c.